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A Magazine takes a retrospect of past times; it revives those valuable things that were ready to perish by the lapse of time, preserves from destruction and annihilation what was subjected to the corroding rust of antiquity, or about to be lost in the mist of distance; presents again and again, with no unnecessary repetition, those important subjects that ought to be kept alive in the world. It explores the treasures of ancient learning, and selects what is worthy of being modernised, and adapted to present purposes. It is a free and public stage, upon which imagination, wit, and taste may exhibit their fascinating powers; where genius may display his inventions and refined improvements; where learning is invited to figure in all her arts and eloquence, and common sense to perform for the pleasure and improvement of the promiscuous multitude.

A Magazine travels abroad for the patriotic purpose of making practical observation upon the transactions of the world, and importing whatever may promote the prosperity and happiness of that region which gave it birth, and by which it expects to be cherished. It resides at home to improve the agriculture, enrich the fields, and promote the fertility of its native soil; to ameliorate the condition of cheerless poverty, to encrease and enlarge commerce, improve trade and manufactures, to support the independence and national spirit of the country, polish its manners, improve its morals, and eventually advance the public good.

As the nation's official servant, it notes and records important passing events, as revolving time presents them to view. It watches the motions, and stimulates to repel the aggressions of foreign and domestic foes. It guards against damping the spirits, or injuring the health and vigour of the nation; by depicting her as distressed with evils that are only imaginary, or by giving gloomy exaggerations of those that are real. Danger is pointed out but with the view of urging her to meet it with stability and heroism. Her disabilities and grievances are delineated for the purpose of obtaining reform and redress; solely by the influence of reason, and the prevalent claims of justice. Caution is ever exercised against kindling and cherishing in her bosom that blind zeal and party-spirit, which scatter around them fire-brands, arrows and death. Disaffection and libertine phrenzy are not permitted to disseminate their inflammatory libels against peace, liberty, and good order; even though they should come forward under the specious mask of disinterested patriotism and public spirit.

Where a critical review of new publications is admitted, it unquestionably forms an important item in the contents of a Magazine. In the impartial and judicious management of criticism every author receives his due; whether he be an eminent personage, or one moving in an humble sphere, coincide with the critics peculiar sentiments and prejudices, or differ from them. A gratifying tribute of praise is paid to genuine merit; ignorance and insolence are exposed; what is injurious, worthless, or of immoral tendency is stigmatised as infamous. The wheat is separated from the chaff, froth and rubbish are swept away, and worth preserved; sterling coin is distinguished from what is counterfeit, and an attempt made to discover that alloy which intermingles with the purest metals. An opportunity is given for the advanced and aspiring student, to gain instruction upon the needful subject of English composition. The public are preserved from wasting their money upon those publications, or spending precious time in perusing those that are false in their theory, or vicious in their contents and design; or that are replenished with emptiness, though they should be addressed to the world, under the artful disguise of splendid gilding, and pompous titles, or recommended by great names. Petty scribblers, with all their affected cant of despising criticism, become afraid to peep from obscurity, while talent is called to exertion, encouraged, and crowned with honour.

Ballynahinch. S. E.

To the Editor of the Belfast Magazine.

I AM as unwilling to occupy much of your pages with controversy, as you can be to admit me; for I greatly dislike the spirit of controversy, and

have seldom found good effects, or the convincement of an opponent, to result from it. I write to clear myself from some misrepresentations of Criticus in your last number. I pass, without further reprehension, his concluding paragraph, in which he attempts to school me, in terms sufficiently dogmatical, for reasoning on complex ideas. But I particularly object to his unfairness in questioning my motives, which he considers as only *apparently* on the side of justice and liberality. In my former letter, I took up my pen really on that side: I blamed an error hostile to the Catholics, and was a sincere advocate in the cause of justice. My political creed as connected with theology, is a short one: I think no man should be questioned for his religious opinions, or suffer any political disabilities on account of them. Actions only are cognizable by the state. Actuated by these sentiments, I am a sincere and unequivocal friend to Catholic emancipation. I can excuse the irritability of Criticus, in mistaking a friend for an enemy, in the same manner as I would pardon a man who had been ill used in a crowd, and who gave me a blow, because I was the first person with whom he met afterwards; and to this very circumstance, which I previously supposed might possibly occur, I alluded when I spoke of "the passions of the two opposite parties." I wish that my Catholic brethren should enjoy every political right in its fullest extent: having no inclination to encroach on their right of private judgment, I claim the same for myself; if I think they have prejudices, I would not like to flatter them, but speak my sentiments in the spirit of free discussion. For I think a too common error in politics, lies, in going with one party or other in all their prejudices, and because we see cause on the whole to join on one side of the question, on that account to enter into a defence of all the collateral branches connected with it. Criticus altogether mistakes me, if he supposes I desire the King to be invested with any power over the nomination of the Catholic Bishops. I object as well to the interference of the King as of the Pope, and I am pleased to find that Criticus confirms me in the opinion, that there is nothing in the plan I mentioned inconsistent with the ancient strict canonical mode of their church. A numerous body of Catholics in England, at the head of whom was the late Lord Petre, and the late highly respectable and enlightened Dr. Geddes, strongly advocated this mode a few years ago, and exposed themselves to much censure from the bigoted party on this very account.

To enliven the dryness of a controversial reply, I shall give a quotation from a respectable work lately published,* the author of which is a Catholic, to show the ancient manner of that church appointing its Bishops. It probably may be new to some of your readers, and convey acceptable information to them. "The right of nominating to Bishopricks was finally settled, in Germany, by the Concordate of 1447, which confirmed the election of Bishops to the chapters exercising that right; in France, by the Concordate of 1516, which vested the nomination to Bishopricks, and the collation of certain benefices of the higher class, in the Kings of France; in Spain, by prescription, repeatedly allowed by the Popes, under which the Kings have uninterruptedly exercised the right of nominating Bishops, and in England, by the charter of King John, recognized and confirmed by his great charter, and by the 25th of Edward the third, Stat. 6. §. 3, which gave up to the Chapters the free right of electing their Prelates."

CENSOR.

To the Editor of the Belfast Magazine.

SIR,

IN your Magazine for September, your Correspondent, I.P. asserts that the premium on Gold, and the unfavourable exchange prove that bank paper, has suffered a depreciation, and in support of this opinion, he quotes Lord Lauderdale and other eminent writers on the subject. "That the

* Notes on the Revolutions of the German Empire, by Charles Butler; an interesting and valuable work, published in London, 1807.